



# News Release

## US Army Corps of Engineers®

Mississippi Valley Division/  
Mississippi River Commission

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## High Water Notice

Vicksburg, Miss., May 8, 2002 -- The National Weather Service Lower Mississippi River Forecast Center in Slidell, La., yesterday issued flood crest predictions involving significant flooding on the Mississippi River and tributaries, prompting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, to alert lower valley residents and businesses of the potential for high-water levels.

The flooding is a result of the excessive rainfalls that have occurred in the Mississippi and Ohio basins above Cairo, Ill., within the past week.

### ST. LOUIS AREA

The information reflected below is based on current National Weather Service river forecasts. Heavy rains could cause river levels to rise even higher than predicted.

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## Upper Mississippi River

<u>Gage</u>	<u>Flood Stage</u>	<u>Current Stage</u>	<u>NWS 3-Day Forecast</u>			<u>Predicted Crest &amp; Date</u>	
Louisiana	15.0	15.8	17.2	17.8	18.8	19.0	5/10p
LD No. 24(tw)	25.0	26.4	28.1	28.8	29.7	29.9	5/10p
LD No. 25(tw)	26.0	27.0	28.4	29.6	30.2	30.5	5/11a
Grafton	18.0	20.1	22.4	24.6	25.6	25.7	5/11p
Alton	21.0	18.6	20.8	25.1	27.7	28.2	5/11a

Impacts: The Upper Mississippi within the St. Louis District is experiencing moderate flooding, with adjacent low lying and unprotected areas being impacted. If NWS forecasts hold true (5-7 feet above flood stage), flooding should remain confined within the flood damage reduction system. However, with precipitation potential high all the way through June, the situation could lead to major flooding.

## Middle Mississippi River

<u>Gage</u>	<u>Flood Stage</u>	<u>Current Stage</u>	<u>NWS 3-Day Forecast</u>			<u>Predicted Crest &amp; Date</u>	
St. Louis	30.0	22.5	25.4	30.9	34.3	35.0	5/11a
Chester	27.0	24.5	25.5	29.0	32.9	Not Available	
Cape Girardeau	32.0	30.6	30.9	32.5	34.8	40.0	5/13a

Impacts: Owing largely to "lower" levels along the Missouri River, the Middle Mississippi will experience moderate to major flooding depending upon the location, with the immediate St. Louis area and the Cape Girardeau, Mo., area experiencing only moderate flooding.

## Missouri River

<u>Gage</u>	<u>Flood Stage</u>	<u>Current Stage</u>	<u>Predicted NWS 3-Day Forecast</u>			<u>Crest &amp; Date</u>	
Hermann	21.0	09.9	19.4	21.4	21.1	21.5	5/09p
St. Charles	25.0	12.7	16.8	22.4	23.9	24.0	5/10p

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Impacts: Long-range forecasts go slightly above flood stage on the Missouri River within the St. Louis District. Flooding should remain confined within the flood damage reduction system. However, with precipitation potential high all the way through June, the situation could lead to major flooding.

#### Illinois River

<u>Gage</u>	<u>Flood Stage</u>	<u>Current Stage</u>	<u>NWS 3-Day Forecast</u>			<u>Predicted Crest &amp; Date</u>	
Hardin	25.0	28.7	30.2	31.3	32.1	32.5	5/11p

#### Kaskaskia River

<u>Gage</u>	<u>Flood Stage</u>	<u>Current Stage</u>	<u>NWS 3-Day Forecast</u>			<u>Predicted Crest &amp; Date</u>	
Vandalia	18.0	21.1	26.2	27.0	26.4	27.5	5/08p

Impacts: Vandalia gage may exceed record height of 27.4 feet set in 1996. Adjacent farmlands along the entire Kaskaskia River are already wet, so crops have not yet been planted. Reservoirs are releasing water now to provide flood protection after crops have been planted. If the Kaskaskia River reaches 27.4 feet, the levee there will overtop. While the city will remain unaffected, some protected farmland will be impacted.

#### MEMPHIS AREA

The Mississippi River is expected to crest at 38 feet May 15 at the New Madrid, Mo., gage. Bankfull at New Madrid is 40 feet.

This will put approximately one third of the Birds Point-New Madrid floodway (38,500 acres or 60 square miles) under water. The water is entering the floodway through the 1,500-foot gap at the lower end of the floodway.

Of the 38,500 acres being impacted, approximately 30,000 acres are croplands. The remaining 8,500 acres are primarily forested areas, pasture and existing bodies of water in the floodway.

Portions of some low-lying roads will be under water at 38 feet on the New Madrid gage. Specifically, portions of Highway WW will be under water.

Other relevant gage predictions (based on current National Weather Service Quantitative Precipitation Forecasts) are as follows:

- Cairo, Ill., to crest at 50 feet on May 14 (bankfull is 44 feet).
- Caruthersville, Mo., to crest at 38 feet on May 16 (bankfull is 35 feet).
- Memphis, Tenn., to crest at 33 feet on May 18 (bankfull is 34 feet).

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If additional rainfall occurs, higher levels and additional impacts can be expected.

## **VICKSBURG AREA**

The current river forecast has the Mississippi River at Vicksburg going to 41 feet on May 24. The river crested previously at 41.6 feet on April 12. Conditions will be very similar to what occurred then.

Basically, roads in the Long Lake and Chickasaw Bayou communities will be under water. Access to hunting/fishing camps and other property will be cut off. Low lying agriculture lands and thousands of acres of cropland that have been planted since the April high water will be inundated, particularly in the Yazoo Backwater Area, Lower Yazoo, Bayou Pierre, Coles Creek, St. Catherine Creek, Lake Mary, and Homochitto River. In addition, some cropland on the protected side of the Mississippi River levees will be impacted from seepage.

For more on Mississippi River stages, visit the following district web sites:

St. Louis -- <http://mvs-wc.mvs.usace.army.mil/>

Memphis -- <http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/hydraulics/memphis.htm>

Vicksburg -- <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/offices/ed/edh/watercontrol.htm>